THE PORT OF NEW YORK AUTHORITY

K-127

May 21, 1970

Hon. Robert N. Rickles, Commissioner
Department of Air Resources
51 Astor Place
New York, New York 10003

Dear Commissioner Rickles:

I am pleased to advise you that as a result of the tests of non-asbestos fire-proofing material conducted over the past month, The Port of New York Authority is taking steps to require its contractor to substitute this non-asbestos material, called CAFCO, in the spraying of fire-proofing for the balance of The World Trade Center construction. In addition, the relative small amount of asbestos already in place will be cocooned to prevent exposure of the asbestos to the circulating air. In applying the non-asbestos material the contractor will continue to use tarpaulin covers to minimize dispersal of that material into the circulating air.

The above work will result in an additional expenditure of $310,000 by the Port Authority and $175,000 by ALCOA our exterior wall contractor.

As you know, the Port Authority has worked closely with your Department and with scientists at Mt. Sinai Hospital in considering the possible use of this non-asbestos fire-proofing material as a positive step toward avoiding air pollution. Your opinion that the use of this non-asbestos fire-proofing material would be consistent with the safeguard of public health was a most important factor.

We have pursued with the supplier of the non-asbestos material the matter you raised as to the presence of silicates in the material. The supplier assured us, as I understand he will be directly advising your Department, that any silicates present will not occasion a hazard to the public health.

We appreciate the assistance of your Department and your consultants in the many months of discussion concerning fire-proofing materials used in the construction of The World Trade Center. As you know, these discussions have taken place on an entirely voluntary basis in light of the legal status of the Port Authority as a governmental agency of the States of New York and New Jersey.

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You have advised us that you are recommending that the City's new air pollution code include a provision banning the spraying of asbestos-contained material in the City of New York. I think you will agree that the anti-pollution procedures heretofore developed and instituted by the Port Authority and its contractors in the use of asbestos spraying have been a landmark in construction techniques. In fact, our procedures were the basis for the rules and regulations governing asbestos spraying which were ordered into effect by you as of May 13, 1970.

As effective as these procedures might have been, the steps we are now taking to substitute a CAFCO material containing rock wool rather than asbestos in the spraying of fire-proofing material at The World Trade Center is consistent with the regulations that you are now considering for all the construction industry in the City.

Sincerely,

/s/ Austin J. Tobin

Austin J. Tobin
Executive Director